

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 2304

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 OSLO 3969

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, SV, NO

SUBJ: UPCOMING BILATERAL SVALBARD TALKS WITH NORWAY

REFS: (A) OSLO 3336, (B) STATE 187672, (C) OSLO 3828, (D) OSLO 3156

1. AS DEPT BEGINS TO PREPARE FOR BILATERAL SVALBARD TALKS THIS FALL WITH NORWAY, EMBASSY WISHES TO SET FORWARD SEVERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PLANNING DISCUSSIONS.

2. IN LIGHT OF OUR DECEMBER BILATERAL TALKS, THE NSDM'S CONCLUSION, THE AIDE-MEMOIRE WE GAVE NORWAY IN MAY, AND THE SECRETARY'S DISCUSSIONS IN OSLO, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE VALUABLE FOR US TO PULL TOGETHER THE STRANDS OF THESE SEPARATE ACTIVITIES AND CONSOLIDATE OUR VIEWS AND UNDERSTANDING BOTH AS TO OUR POSITIONS ON SVALBARD AND THE DIRECTIONS WE WANT TO LEAD OUR BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL DISCUSSIONS.

3. PRIMARY US AND ALLIED OBJECTIVES INCLUDE STRENGTHENING
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THE WESTERN POSITION BY SUPPORTING NORWAY'S SOVEREIGNTY ON

SVALBARD AND PREVENTING SOVIET ENCROACHMENT WHILE KEEPING TENSIONS LOW. A SECONDARY US OBJECTIVE IS TO PROTECT OUR ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND OTHER RIGHTS UNDER THE 1920 TREATY. WE HAVE SET FORTH IN OUR TELEGRAM ON THE PROPOSED SVALBARD FISHERY ZONE (OSLO 3336) THE EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON THE BASIC INTERESTS AND CONCERNS OF THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN THE DIVERSE SVALBARD ISSUES. AS WE PURSUE OUR DISCUSSIONS WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP THESE INTERESTS CLEARLY IN MIND, AND AT THE SAME TIME RECOGNIZE THAT THE PRIORITY EACH OF THE COUNTRIES ATTACHES TO THESE RESPECTIVE INTERESTS MAY IN FACT DIFFER, AS MAY THE APPROACHES TO PROTECTING THE INTERESTS.

4. THE NORWEGIANS, QUITE NATURALLY, PLACE HIGH PRIORITY ON MAINTAINING THEIR SOVEREIGNTY. THEY SEE THIS AS A MEANS OF MAINTAINING THEIR PRESENCE, CONTROLLING ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA SO AS TO PREVENT SOVIET ENCROACHMENTS AND PROTECTING THEIR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND INTERESTS. A STRONG DOMESTIC PUBLIC OPINION REINFORCED BY A SENSE OF NATIONALISM WILL MAKE IT IMPORTANT FOR ANY NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT TO GIVE VISIBLE EVIDENCE THAT IT IS ASSERTING AND PROTECTING NORWAY'S RIGHTS IN THE BARENTS SEA AREA. BUT, THEY WILL ALSO BE TEMPERED BY THEIR SENSITIVITY TO SOVIET REACTION TO NORWEGIAN ACTION IN GENERAL AND THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE REALITY OF A LARGE AND INDEPENDENT SOVIET PRESENCE AT BARENTSBURG SINCE 1933 IN PARTICULAR.

5. NATURALLY, THE NORWEGIANS WILL VIEW THEIR SVALBARD INTERESTS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR OVERALL INTERESTS IN THE NORTH. THESE INCLUDE INTERESTS IN THE BARENTS SEA AREA--SUCH AS FISHERIES, OFFSHORE OIL RESOURCES AND CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS--WHICH THEY SEE AS BEING INDIRECTLY RELATED TO SVALBARD. BUT, THESE ISSUES DIRECTLY IMPINGE ON THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, WHERE NORWAY SEEKS TO PROTECT ITS NATIONAL INTEREST, FULFILL ITS ALLIANCE RESPONSIBILITIES AND AT THE SAME TIME MAINTAIN NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS WITH THE USSR. THE FOREIGN MINISTER EMPHASIZED HIS PERCEPTION OF HOW NORWAY MUST SEEK TO BALANCE ITS INTERESTS IN THE SVALBARD, BARENTS SEA AREA EARLIER THIS MONTH (OSLO 3828).

6. THE SOVIETS ARE KEENLY ALERT TO THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL ISSUES IN THE NORTH. THEY WANT TO

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ENHANCE THEIR INFLUENCE THERE GENERALLY, PROVIDE FULL ACCESS FOR THEIR FLEET AND PROTECT FISHING AND OTHER RESOURCES INTERESTS WHILE KEEPING RELATIONS WITH NORWAY ON AN EVEN KEEL. THEIR TACTICS WITH THE NORWEGIANS HAVE BEEN TO BLEND SOFT TALK AND MUSCLE-FLEXING. TO ENHANCE THEIR POSITION THEY ARE MOST LIKELY TO SEEK TO DRAW NORWAY INTO A SPECIAL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP IN THE NORTH (OSLO 3336). QUITE LIKELY THE SOVIETS REALIZE THAT THEIR INTEREST AND THAT OF THE NORWEGIANS (AND OURS) COINCIDE

IN WANTING TO REDUCE TENSION AND INCREASE STABILITY IN THE AREA.

7. THE SOVIETS STALEMATED THE LAST ROUND OF BARENTS SEA CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS WITH NORWAY BY TAKING AN UNCOMPROMISING STAND ON THE DIVIDING LINE (OSLO 3156). THEY MAY SEE THIS AS AN OCCASION TO COAX NORWAY INTO SETTLING A NUMBER OF THE UNSOLVED BARENTS SEA ISSUES THROUGH SOME KIND OF BILATERAL, PACKAGE DEAL WHICH LUMPS THESE ISSUES, POSSIBLY INCLUDING SVALBARD MATTERS, TOGETHER. THIS IS ONE PRINCIPAL REASON WHY THE EMBASSY FEELS THE US SHOULD KEEP ITS HAND FIRMLY IN SVALBARD MATTERS NOW BY MAINTAINING ITS RESERVATION ON SVALBARD SHELF RIGHTS AND, IF NEED BE, BY PLACING A RESERVATION AT THE MOST APPROPRIATE TIME ON ANY ECONOMIC OR FISHERY ZONE THE GON MAY ESTABLISH AROUND SVALBARD (OSLO 3336).

8. IN LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE OUR BILATERAL TALKS IN DECEMBER, IT MAY BE ADVISABLE TO CONSIDER AGAIN HOW THE US WISHES TO APPROACH THE SVALBARD ECONOMIC ISSUES WITH THE NORWEGIANS AND WITH OUR ALLIES. WHEN ALL INTERESTS ARE CONSIDERED THE ECONOMIC QUESTION MAY STILL BE THE ONE NORWAY AND HER ALLIES HAVE DIFFICULTY AGREEING UPON. THE SECRETARY EMPHATICALLY STATED IN OSLO THAT THE US POSITION ON THE SVALBARD ISSUES STEMS PRIMARILY FROM OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE STABILITY OF THE NORTHERN FLANK AND THE SECURITY OF NORWAY AND ONLY SECONDARILY FROM ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS--A POSITION WHICH GENERALLY COINCIDES WITH NORWAY'S. WE BELIEVE, NONETHELESS, THE NORWEGIANS PUT A MUCH HIGHER PRIORITY THAN WE DO ON ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE AREA. THEY DO THIS NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE IN A HURRY TO EXPLOIT THE AREA--THEY ARE NOT--BUT RATHER BECAUSE THEY SEE THE ECONOMIC ISSUE RELATED PRINCIPALLY TO THEIR ABILITY TO ASSERT THEIR SOV-EREIGNTY, IN PART TO MANAGE DEVELOPMENTS SO AS TO REDUCE TENSIONS IN THE AREA, AND--PERHAPS TO A SLIGHTLY LESSER EXTENT--BECAUSE THEY WOULD LIKE TO RESERVE THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM THE AREA FOR

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THEMSELVES IN THE FUTURE (OR AT LEAST NOT TO BE SUBJECT TO THE CHARGE DOMESTICALLY

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THAT THE GOVERNMENT GAVE THOSE RESOURCES AWAY). ALSO, OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES ARE LIKELY TO PLACE SOMEWHAT HIGHER PRIORITY THAN WE ON THE ECONOMIC ISSUES, AT LEAST AT THIS STAGE IN THEIR CONSIDERATION OF SVALBARD INTERESTS. SOME HAVE STRONG FISHERIES INTERESTS AROUND SVALBARD AND THEY MAY PERCEIVE SVALBARD OIL TO BE A LARGER FACTOR IN THEIR RESOURCE INTERESTS. THUS, THOUGH WE MAY SEE OUR DIRECT ECONOMIC INTERESTS RANKING WELL BEHIND OUR STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL INTERESTS A VIEW WITH WHICH THE EMBASSY AGREES) WE MUST KEEP IN MIND THAT THE DIFFERING NATIONAL EVALUATIONS OF THIS PRIORITY COULD BE A STUMBLING BLOCK IN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A UNIFIED ALLIED APPROACH TO SVALBARD ISSUES. IT IS ONE OF THE AREAS WHERE FURTHER CLARIFICATION OF THE ISSUE THROUGH CONSULTATION WITH NORWAY AND OUR ALLIES WILL BE IMPORTANT. THE ECONOMIC ISSUE IS ALSO POTENTIALLY A ZERO SUM SITUATION WHERE THE GON MAY BE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF ALL OTHER PARTIES.

9. AS THE NORWEGIANS PREPARE FOR OUR UPCOMING BILATERAL TALKS, WE BELIEVE THEY ASSUME THAT A PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF THE DISCUSSION
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WILL CENTER ON QUESTIONS RAISED IN OUR MAY AIDE MEMOIRE. THOUGH THE SECRETARY ASSURED THEM THAT MAJOR US INTERESTS WERE NOT ECONOMIC ONES, THE GON STILL EXPECTS THE ECONOMIC ISSUES, AS IT IS MANIFEST IN THE RESOURCE REGIME QUESTION, TO BE ONE OF THE PRIMARY SUBJECTS OF OUR FALL DISCUSSIONS. IN THIS REGARD THEY HAVE ESTABLISHED AN INTERAGENCY GROUP TO EXAMINE ALTERNATIVE

PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO REGIMES FOR CONTINENTAL SHELF RESOURCES. THEY ARE, HOWEVER, SOMEWHAT UNEASY ABOUT CONSIDERATING THE REGIME ISSUE FOR THEY FEEL IT MIGHT ULTIMATELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THEIR POSITION THAT TREATY RIGHTS DO NOT EXTEND TO THE SHELF AND BECAUSE THEY KNOW THE SOVIETS ARE LIKELY TO OPPOSE EXPLOITATION THERE. IN HIS OSLO TALKS ON SVALBARD, AS WE MENTIONED EARLIER, THE SECRETARY DOWNGRADED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ECONOMIC ISSUES RELATIVE TO STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL ONES. WE HOPE THE NORWEGIANS IN THEIR PREPARATIONS OF OUR FALL BILATERAL ARE NOT ATTACHING MORE SIGNIFICANCE TO THE US INTEREST IN ECONOMIC QUESTIONS THAN IS NOW APPROPRIATE. THE DEPT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER HOW THE ECONOMIC ISSUES WILL BE HANDLED IN THE TALKS SO WE CAN INFORM THE NORWEGIANS.

10. OTHER POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR OUR NEXT ROUND OF TALKS WHICH COULD BE OUTLINED BY THE NORWEGIANS CONCERN RELEVANT DEVELOPMENTS SINCE OUR DECEMBER MEETING IN THE THREE PRINCIPAL AREAS OF OUR JOINT CONSIDERATION-(A) THEIR EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN SVALBARD CONTROLS (WHERE VARIOUS NEW CONTROLS MEASURES AND UP-GRADING OF ADMINISTRATION WILL FIGURE PROMINENTLY); (B) CONTINENTAL SHELF RIGHTS (WHERE THEIR PLANS FOR ASSERTING A SVALBARD FISHERY ZONE SHOULD BE A MAJOR SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION ON BOTH SIDES); (C) THEIR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY. THE US DELEGATION WILL WANT TO PROBE THE NORWEGIANS CAREFULLY TO SEE IF THEY DETECT IN THE FIRM STANCE THE SOVIETS ARE NOT TAKING IN THE NEGOTIATIONS THE MARKINGS OF A SOVIET PACKAGE DEAL PROPOSAL IN THE NORTH WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE THE BOUNDARY, CONTINENTAL SHELF RIGHTS AND OTHER SVALBARD RELATED ISSUES. THIS IS, AS WE HAVE ALREADY INDICATED, A POTENTIAL POINT OF VULNERABILITY FOR THE NORWEGIANS WHERE THEIR DESIRES TO KEEP THE PEACE IN THE NORTH, AND TO MAINTAIN NEIGHBORLY BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS MIGHT MAKE THE NORWEGIANS GOVERNMENT MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET BLANDISHMENTS THAN THEIR WESTERN ALLIES MIGHT WISH. OUR CONTINUED RESERVATION ON THE TREATY, AND THOSE OF OUR ALLIES, IS A USEFUL LEVER
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IN THESE TALKS WHICH WE WILL NOT WANT TO GIVE AWAY WITHOUT CLEAR ASSURANCES OF NORWEGIAN INTENTIONS VIS-A-VIS BOTH OUR STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE NORTH.

11. WE EXPECT THE NORWEGIANS WILL WISH TO BE APPRAISED OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR THINKING ON SVALBARD ISSUES, APRTICULARLY STEMMING FROM THE SECRETARY'S TALKS HERE. WE WILL WANT TO SET FORWARD OUR VIEWS ON THEIR FISHERY ZONE PROPOSAL. THEY WILL WANT TO HEAR ANY FURTHER THINKING WE HAVE ON SOVIET INTENTIONS OR CAPABILITIES IN THE NORTH, AND SPECIFIC PLANS WE HAVE FOR EXPANDING US SCIENTIFIC PRESENCE. THE STATUS OF THE NANSEN DRIFT STATION PROJECT AND ITS POSSIBLE CONNECTION TO SVALBARD WILL BE OF INTEREST HERE. ADDITIONALLY, WE SHOULD CONSIDER

TO WHAT EXTENT WE WISH TO INFORM NORWAY ABOUT PAST AND PLANNED
CONSULTATIONS WITH OUR ALLIED TREATY PARTNERS ON SVALBARD.
THE NORWEGIANS UNDERSTAND WE ARE HAVING SUCH DISCUSSIONS.
THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS EXPRESSED AN INTEREST HERE AND
TO THE EXTENT WE CAN BRING THEM IN ON THE PURPOSE AND SUBSTANCE
OF THESE TALKS THEY WILL BE GRATEFUL AND HOPEFULLY PUT SOMEWHAT
AT EASE ABOUT THEM.

12. THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO REPORT ON ACTIVITIES
IN A NUMBER OF THE AREAS DISCUSSED ABOVE TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT
IN ITS PREPARATION OF THE UPCOMING TALKS. IN THE MEANTIME
WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON THE TIMING
OF AND SUBSTANCE OF THESE TALKS.
ANDERS

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